

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 178551

64

ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 PRS-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 A-01 AID-05 DHA-02 OMB-01

OPR-02 SCS-03 SCA-01 SCCT-01 SY-05 EB-07 COME-00 /074 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL KADUNA NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL IBADAN NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, NI

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE ON NIGERIAN COUP

THE FOLLOWING IS GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR USE BY THE DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN ON AN IF ASKED BASIS:

Q - DOES THE DEPARTMENT HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON THE COUP REPORTED IN NIGERIA?

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PAGE 02 STATE 178551

A - OUR EMBASSY REPORTS THAT THE NIGERIAN RADIO HAS

BEEN BROADCASTING AT THIRTY MINUTE INTERVALS AN ANNOUNCEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO COL. JOSEPH GARBA THAT THE NIGERIAN ARMED FORCES HAVE DECIDED ON A CHANGE IN NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THAT GENERAL GOWON NO LONGER IS EITHER HEAD OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT OR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES.

COL. GARBA STATED THAT THE CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT WAS EFFECTED PEACEFULLY. OUR EMBASSY REPORTS ALL AMERICANS AND AMERICAN INSTALLATIONS ARE UNHARMED. WE HAVE RECEIVED NO REPORTS OF VIOLENCE. A DUSK TO DAWN CURFEW HAS BEEN DECLARED, THE AIRPORT AND BORDERS ARE CLOSED, AND TELEX SERVICE HAS BEEN SUSPENDED.

Q - HOW MANY AMERICANS ARE IN NIGERIA?

A - APPROXIMATELY 3,000. IN ADDITION TO US GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND DEPENDENTS AT OUR EMBASSY IN LAGOS AND CONSULATES AT IBADAN AND KADUNA, THERE IS A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF PRIVATE BUSINESSMEN AND MISSIONARIES ARE ALSO IN NIGERIA.

Q - DON'T WE GET A LOT OF OUR OIL FROM NIGERIA?

A - NIGRIA IS THE LARGEST SUPPLIER OF FOREIGN CRUDE IMPORTED BY THE US; APPROXIMATELY 20 PERCENT OF OUR OFFSHORE NEEDS ARE SATISFIED THIS WAY.

Q - HOW MUCH HAVE AMERICANS INVESTED IN NIGERIA?

A - APPROXIMATELY DOLS 1 BILLION, MOSTLY IN PETROLEUM RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

Q - WHAT WAS THE REASON FOR THE COUP?

A - IN HIS RADIO BROADCAST COL. GARBA REFERRED ONLY TO "WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING IN THE COUNTRY IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS" WITHOUT ANY FURTHER PRECISION.

Q - WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT COL. GARBA?

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PAGE 03 STATE 178551

A - HE HAS BEEN SERVING AS COMMANDER OF THE BRIGADE OF GUARDS, THE UNIT RESPONSIBLE FOR GOWON'S PERSONAL SECURITY. ACCORDING TO OUR RECORDS, HE WAS BORN ON JULY 17, 1943 AT LANGTANG IN NORTHAASTERN NIGERIA. HE RECEIVED MILITARY TRAINING IN NIGERIA AND THE UK.

Q - WILL THE US RECOGNIZE THE NEW REGIME?

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A - OUR NORMAL PRACTICE IN INSTANCES SUCH AS THIS IS TO
MONITOR THE SITUATION CLOSELY, MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH
OFFICIALS AT THE WORKING LEVEL BUT REFRAINING FROM MAJOR
INITIATIVES. A DECISION REGARDING RESUMPTION OF FULL
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS USUALLY IS POSTPONED UNTIL THE
SITUATION IS MORE CLEAR THAN AT PRESENT.

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